

Mitterrand to seek second term

PARIS (R) — President François Mitterrand announced Tuesday he would run for a second term as president of France in elections to be held April 24 and May 8. The 71-year-old socialist, president since 1981, told French television in an interview he was the only person who could give France social peace. "I want France to be limited. It will not be if it is taken over by smaller spirits, parties and clauses," he said. Opinion polls make Mitterrand the clear favorite to win a second seven-year term against the two leading rightist challengers. Prime Minister Jacques Chirac and former Prime Minister Raymond Barre. In an unexpectedly strong attack on the candidates of the right, Mitterrand said: "I have listened to their speeches and, amongst all this noise, I perceive a risk for the country of falling again into the quarrels and divisions which have so often undermined it." Mitterrand, the first socialist to rule France since General Charles de Gaulle founded the Fifth Republic in 1958, said he wished he was 10 years younger. "It is a challenge I did not want for myself. Everyone will understand me. But I think it is necessary for someone to resist and I will do it," he declared.

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King sends message

CAIRO (Petra) — Egyptian presidential advisor Osama Al-Baz Tuesday conveyed a message from His Majesty King Hussein to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in reply to a verbal message which was conveyed to the King by Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdal Meguid at an audience Sunday.

Fayez off to Cairo

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House Speaker Akef Al Fayez Tuesday left for Cairo at the head of a Jordanian parliamentary delegation on a several-day official visit to Egypt where he will hold talks with his Egyptian counterpart on parliamentary and bilateral relations and the latest developments in the region.

Arafat in Romania

BELGRADE (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat arrived in Bucharest Tuesday for talks with President and Communist Party leader Nicolae Ceausescu.

Gemayel gets Shultz message

BEIRUT (AP) — American Ambassador to Lebanon John Kelly Tuesday handed President Amin Gemayel a letter from U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz concerning the American Mideast peace plan. After his meeting with Gemayel, Kelly told reporters that the United States supports Lebanon's desire to participate in a proposed international peace conference to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Ozal to visit Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP) — Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal will pay an official visit to Iraq next week, a Turkish embassy official said Tuesday. The official told the AP Iraqi and Turkish officials have completed arrangements for Ozal's visit, which would come four weeks after a similar trip to Iran.

Syria opens first women's military college

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria's first military college for women has been formally opened near Damascus by Defence Minister Major-General Mustafa Tlas. officials said Tuesday. Single women aged from 18 to 24 with high school degrees will train at the college for two years to graduate as second lieutenants.

Liberia 'foils' plot to kill Doe

MONROVIA (R) — Liberia said Tuesday it had foiled a plot to overthrow the government and kill President Samuel Doe. A statement issued by the Information Ministry said 12 of 19 suspected plotters had been arrested.

Woman planted Beirut bomb

BEIRUT (AP) — Police Tuesday raised the casualty toll in an explosion to two killed and 10 wounded and said the blast was caused by a bomb carried by a woman. The unidentified woman was one of the two people killed in the explosion Monday. The other victim was the landlord's 85-year-old father, Mohammad Kurdi. A police explosives expert told reporters he discovered parts of the woman's body on the staircase of the building at several hours after the blast.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Times Foundation

جordan Times Foundation

U.N. retains law firm in PLO dispute

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The United Nations has retained a New York law firm to respond to the U.S. order to shut the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) U.N. mission, a U.N. spokesman said Tuesday. The spokesman said the law firm would enter the case as a "friend of the court" if the United States took legal action to close the 13-year-old mission. Zehdi Labib Terzi, the PLO representative, told Reuters that as far as he knew Attorney General Edwin Meese had not yet acted, although March 21 was the deadline set in the closure order which Terzi has said he will defy. He said his own lawyers would respond to any U.S. legal action. Former Attorney General Ramsey Clark is advising the PLO. Meanwhile, a nine-member committee of non-aligned states led by Zimbabwe brought the issue to the attention of the U.N. Security Council, calling it a serious situation, a spokesman for council President Dragoslav Pejic said. The spokesman said Pejic, the chief delegate of Yugoslavia, was asked to inform council members of the situation and request that they intercede jointly and individually to try to resolve the issue.

OIC pays tribute to Palestinian uprising, promises support

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Tuesday paid tribute to the Palestinian uprising in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza and pledged support for the Palestinian struggle for liberation.

Individual OIC member states whose representatives addressed the foreign ministers conference Tuesday also spoke in identical terms of the uprising.

OIC report

At the outset of Tuesday's session, OIC Secretary-General Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada presented a report to the foreign ministers on the various issues facing the Islamic World and the activities of the organisation since the last OIC summit, held in Kuwait in January 1987.

The report, he said, was drawn from memos submitted on various issues included in the agenda of the foreign ministers conference. The report outlined the secretary-general's efforts to achieve the goals of the OIC and implement decisions taken at the Kuwait summit as well as the last conference of foreign ministers, held in Morocco.

The report focused on various problems facing the OIC externally as well as internally. It also made many suggestions designed to increase the efficiency of the OIC. A special section dealt with organisational, administrative and financial matters.

Tribute to Pirzada

During Tuesday's session, several delegates praised Pirzada's efforts and contributions on the organisation.

(Continued on page 5)

Text of statement on uprising

Following is the text of the statement issued by the OIC foreign ministers Tuesday on the Palestinian uprising:

The 17th Islamic conference of foreign ministers held in Amman, the land of steadfastness and the threshold of the Holy Land that Allah has sanctified, hail the uprising of our Palestinian brothers in the occupied territory of Palestine, and expresses its total support for our solidarity with them in their courageous confrontation with the policies of the oppressive Israeli occupation forces, as it expresses the pride of all Muslims throughout the world in this courageous uprising, and prays for the souls of its gallant martyrs who have sacrificed themselves and let their pure blood be shed in defense of their homeland.

The heroic uprising, which is gaining in momentum, maturity, strength and scope every day, has belied Israeli allegations, created

(Continued on page 5)

Kaddoumi says new international resolutions needed on Palestinians

By Lamis K. Andoni
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

failure of all resolutions formulated so far to achieve just, comprehensive and durable peace."

New facts'

Reiterating the PLO's support for convening an international peace conference, Kaddoumi said that the "conference will have to respond to the new facts and givens created by the uprising."

Although the uprising was initiated in the occupied territories, the support it gained from Israeli Arabs and the revolt's expression of demands for self-determination have strengthened the line of Palestinian thinking which rejects any consideration of any solution for the West Bank and Gaza as an issue separate from a comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects.

"... The struggle of Arab people in the occupied territories will continue and will push the situation in the area to a point where it will be impossible to go back to the conditions which prevailed before the uprising," Kaddoumi said. "... This new situation created by the uprising will confront the world with one choice, that is to recognise the inalienable legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination and to stop supporting the racial Israeli entity and its aggressive and expansionist policies."

In Kaddoumi's view, self-determination for the Palestinians is a

According to this argument, endorsed by many Palestinian thinkers and officials, the uprising has underscored and emphasised the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination as "the essential element" in any formula to solve the Palestinian question.

During the Arab-Soviet dialogue held here last week, Dr. Ahmad Sidiqi Dajani, chairman of the PLO's Higher Education Council, clearly voiced this argument. In his presentation to the dialogue, Dajani called for a return to U.N. Security Council Resolution 181, known as the Palestine Partition Plan of 1947, as a basis of an international peace conference on the Middle East conflict.

Kaddoumi did not refer to the partition plan Tuesday but stressed that the international community "will eventually admit the

Moscow wants signed Afghan accord in Geneva

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze said Tuesday Moscow preferred to see a signed peace accord in Geneva before withdrawing its military forces from Afghanistan.

Speaking with reporters as he began a second day of pre-summit talks with Secretary of State George Shultz, Shevardnadze seemed to undercut a recent statement by a Soviet official that Moscow would withdraw its 115,000 troops even if U.N.-backed rebels, faltered last week over a U.S. demand that the Soviets end their military aid to the Kabul government in addition to withdrawing their troops.

Asked about the hard-line U.S. position on suspending military aid, Shevardnadze said: "We shall discuss this with the secretary."

The Shultz-Shevardnadze talks, which began Monday and are set to end Wednesday, are the

second in a series of monthly planning sessions to pave the way for a fourth summit between President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Shevardnadze is due to meet Reagan and have lunch at the White House Wednesday.

Despite what appears to be a hardening U.S. stance on Afghanistan and differences over other issues like Nicaragua and the Middle East, Shevardnadze signalled Monday he was prepared to set specific dates for the Moscow summit, expected in late May.

Assistant Secretary of State Roxanne Ridgway was less certain these could be agreed, telling reporters: "I don't want to predict dates, if we get them, fine."

The first order of business Tuesday was the opening of a new communications centre to reduce the risk of nuclear war.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony in a tightly guarded room at the State Department put into effect an agreement for superpower cooperation that is in contrast to the U.S. and Soviet regional rivalries.

From the new centre, the United States will have a satellite link to a similar centre in Moscow over which full texts and graphics can be transmitted rapidly. The idea is to prevent nuclear war by miscalculation or accident. Shultz and Shevardnadze reached agreement last September on the link, which supplements the telecommunications "hot line."

No reply yet

In Washington, the State Department said the United States had yet to receive any formal response to its proposals.

Commenting on Habib's current tour of Arab capitals, de-

Jordan voices total support for S. Arabia

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday voiced Jordan's firm stand in support of Saudi Arabia in the face of Israeli threats and said any Israeli aggression on Saudi Arabia would be considered as an aggression on Jordan.

In a cable to King Fahd Ibn Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia, King Hussein said: "We denounce the recent Israeli threats against brotherly Saudi Arabia and we affirm that any attack on Saudi Arabia is an attack on Jordan."

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, quoted the cable saying "Jordan, with all its forces, including the armed forces, will back Saudi Arabia with all its power and determination."

The Jordanian pledge came

(Continued on page 5)

King, Queen begin Pakistan visit



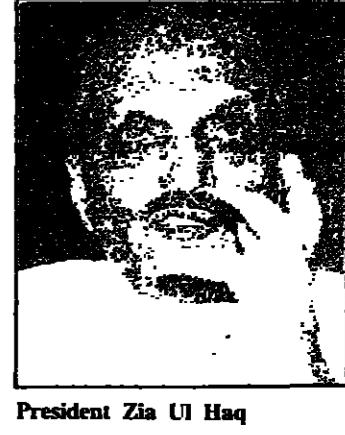
HM King Hussein

Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ibn Zaid and Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Zaid Ibn Shaker.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan was sworn in as Regent before the King's departure from Amman.

The war in Afghanistan is a major issue on the agenda for the talks between the King and Zia.

Foreign Minister Taher Masri told reporters Monday that "the Afghan issue is an important one and there is no doubt that (offers of) a Soviet withdrawal will be discussed."



President Zia Ul Haq

Regent sends good wishes

The Regent Tuesday sent a cable of good wishes to President Zia on his country's National Day. The Regent expressed his delight over the progress in Jordanian-Pakistani relations which he described as "exemplary and brotherly."

"His Majesty King Hussein's visit to Pakistan is bound to further enhance bilateral ties in all fields," the Regent said and wished President Zia health and happiness and more progress and prosperity for the Pakistani people.

3 more killed in W. Bank and Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — A 25-year-old man from the occupied West Bank village of Tubas died Tuesday from gunshot wounds received in a clash with Israeli troops the previous day, Palestinian sources said. Two other Palestinians were also reported killed in the occupied territories in circumstances pointing to Israeli involvement.

Relatives took Hikmat Darahmeh's body before it could be examined by army doctors and buried him at the village, the sources, quoted by Reuter said.

An army spokesman confirmed that troops opened fire when villagers attacked them with rocks and iron bars and later received reports from local residents that a protester had been shot dead in the clash.

Another Palestinian was killed in the southern part of the occupied Gaza when gunmen riddled his car with bullets, the spokesman said.

According to local reports, the man, a resident of Khan Yunis, stopped at a junction. Another locally-licensed car drew alongside and its occupants opened fire.

Police were investigating the

incident and the killing of a 25-year-old from the northern end of the strip found with a smashed skull at the village of Beit Hanoun.

Israeli Radio said Gaza police were unable to investigate the killings as 400 Palestinians had quit the force in response to calls from the uprising's leadership.

A military spokesman denied army involvement in the death and said no troops had been in Beit Hanoun Monday. But a resident of the village said the man believed he had been shot dead in the clash.

Another Palestinian was killed in the Hukkari province, is only a few kilometers from the mountainous and ill-defined border separating Turkey from Iran and Iraq.

The witnesses said two jets, one Iranian and one Iraqi, roared over the village and one of them dropped a bomb before they sped out of sight.

Iran meanwhile renewed its

claims that Iraq was using chemical weapons. It said Iraqi warplanes dropped chemical bombs on three villages around the border town of Marivan, in the northern sector of their 1,180-kilometer warfront.

In southeastern Turkey, a bomb dropped in open ground near the border village of Anadag Tuesday during a chase involving Iranian and Iraqi jets, eyewitnesses said.

The daily high command communiqué said Iraqi troops killed or wounded 200 Iranian soldiers in the northern sector of the war front.

In the Gulf, Iranian gunboats struck a Greek supertanker on its way from Louisiana in the United States to the Saudi terminal of Ras Tanura, in the southern Gulf, and sent 10 of its 29 crew members fleeing to a liferaft.

The attacks were the seventh and eighth by Iran on neutral shipping since Friday.

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Prince Hassan receives Algerian foreign minister

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan received at the Royal Court Tuesday Algeria's Foreign Minister Ahmad Taleb Al-Harbi and discussed with him bilateral relations and means of bolstering cooperation between Algeria and Jordan.

Prince Hassan later received North Yemen's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Development and Planning Mohammad Saad Attas and discussed bilateral relations.

Minister of Planning Taher Kanaan attended the meeting.

Ureikat to set up committee to help NAF programmes

ZARQA (Petra) — Minister of Labour and Social Development Rashid Ureikat has decided to set up a committee in Zarqa Governorate to help carry out the programmes of the National Aid Fund (NAF).

The 12-member committee will contribute to the NAF's activities by spreading awareness among members of the public about the

fund's aims and objectives.

The minister also announced the formation of a committee in Zarqa to take charge of services to the hearing-impaired in the Zarqa Governorate.

The 10-member committee will conduct a study on the handicapped and will propose measures to provide them with assistance.

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

GEOGRAPHICAL CENTRE: Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Farhi Abu Taleb Tuesday presided over a meeting for the Jordan Royal Geographical Centre's Higher Committee and reviewed the centre's activities and future plans.

SUPPORT FOR UPRISING: A national committee to support the Palestinian uprising will hold a press meeting on Sunday, March 27, to discuss the current situation in the occupied Arab territories. The speakers will particularly explain the role of Palestinian women in the ongoing resistance and the committee's measures for supporting the uprising.

NHF ACTIVITIES: Transport and Communications Minister Khaled Haj Hassan Tuesday discussed with Noor Al Hussein Foundation Director General In'am Al Mufti issues pertaining to NHF activities and projects and the ministry's contributions to them.

NEWS EXCHANGE: A duplex line for direct news exchange between the Jordanian News Agency and the Moroccan News Agency was inaugurated Tuesday. The new line will be provided around the clock exchange of news and will help dispatch Petra news to several countries, particularly those in Latin America.

ZARQA SCHOOLS: Schools in Zarqa Governorate and Madaba district Tuesday celebrated Karamah Battle 20th anniversary which fell Monday, by speeches, songs and artistic performances, reflecting the importance of Karamah Battle and its effects on the contemporary Arab history.

SWEDISH ENVOY: Ministry of Social Development Secretary General Mohammad Al Suqour Tuesday discussed with the Swedish Ambassador to Jordan Lars Lonnbach, arrangements for holding a symposium on special education, in Amman on April 13 and the preparations for the Swedish Foreign Affairs Under Secretary's visit to Jordan on April 10.

SCHOOL EXHIBITION: Greater Amman Education Department Director Ahmad Arabit Tuesday inaugurated Ahmad Touqan Preparatory School's first art exhibition, which will run until the end of the school year in June.

EGYPTIAN TEAM: An Egyptian labour delegation, headed by Ahmad Attia, Tuesday discussed with Jordan's Economic and Social Organisation for Retired Servicemen (JESORS) issues pertaining to insurance coverage for Egyptians arriving in transit or for work in Jordan.

7,428 CHILDREN VACCINATED: A total of 7,428 children from Amman Governorate were vaccinated against polio, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus during last month, compared with 1,770 children who were vaccinated against measles. A total of 1,017 mothers were also vaccinated against tetanus.

144,867 PATIENTS: A total of 144,867 patients called at the Amman Governorate health centres for treatment, during January and February, compared with 69,373 patients during the same period in 1987.

'Homeland, time, conflict' is theme of Zaru's exhibition

By Meg Abu Hamdan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — At the Jordan National Gallery, until the end of the month, is an exhibition by the active and committed artist Samia Zaru. The second in the gallery's current series featuring the work of local artists, the exhibition which drew large crowds on its opening night, is a colourful combination of several media through

which Zaru tries to express her main theme — in her own words that of "homeland, time conflict".

The main backbone of the exhibition consists of Zaru's almost naive abstracts. Made up of blocks of bright, raw colours where the evidence of bold broad brushstrokes impose a hasty texture, these pieces centre around what has now become Zaru's hallmark — the small patch of

cross stitch embroidery roughly cut out from an old traditional dress.

The fraying edges of the fabric pieces are picked up and emphasised by drips of paint allowed to flow across the areas of different colours, while the geometric patterns of the traditional designs are echoed in the small squares that seem to fall from behind the patch as though they have been shaken out.

Zaru's sculpture at the Hay Centre, a stylised family group constructed in pieces of scrap metal is now a familiar landmark and the sculptures at this exhibition continue the same theme.

Simplified figures with tubes for heads and limbs and bodies made of curved metal sheets fill the hall along with some larger more abstract pieces, painted in electric blues and glowing oranges the surfaces of which gain added dimensions from the small pieces of metal welded onto them, and from the holes pierced in their sides.

For many years Zaru has been very much involved with the traditional crafts of her country, particularly with the embroidery and weaving and by incorporating them into her art she makes a statement about her commitment to this often exquisite work.

It is, however, in her own weavings, applique work and tapestries, featured at this present exhibition that Zaru's true talent comes to light.

For many the highlight of the show was the huge hangings made of many different kinds of string, knotted and woven together in an uncountable number of ways and interlaced with big wooden beads and Hebrew glass baubles. Suspended from pieces of bleached sundried driftwood and anchored by huge rounded stones that totally complemented and enhanced the weaving, these pieces were engrossing and satisfying.

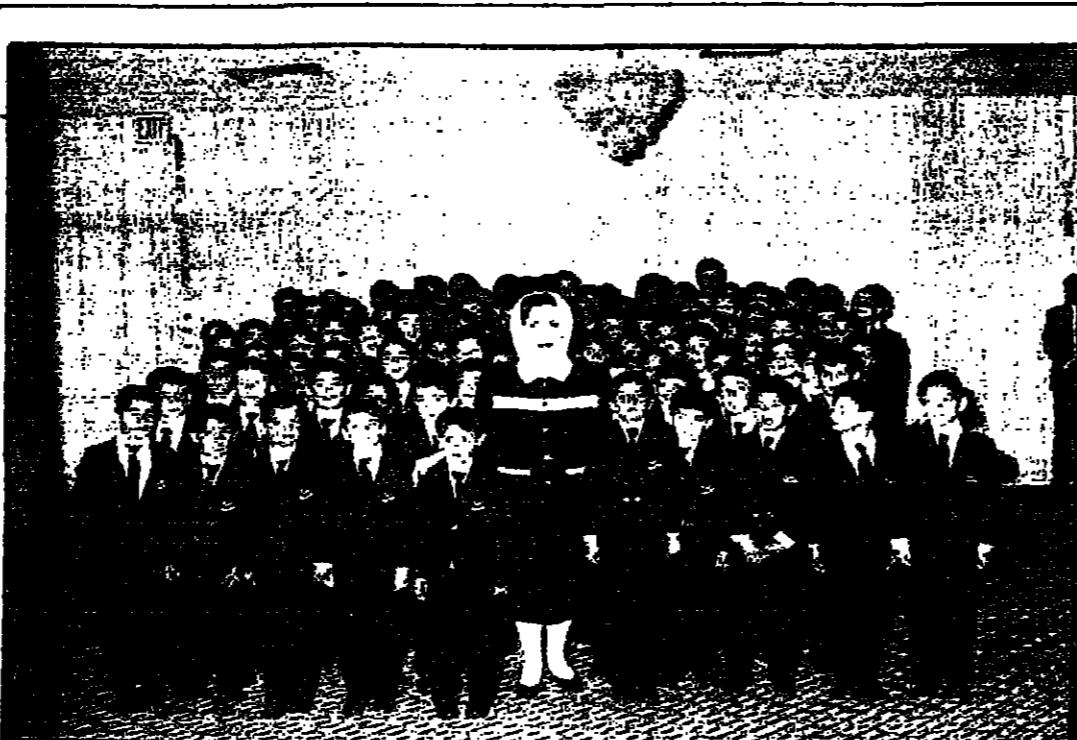
Other good pieces included the wall hanging whose geometric designs woven in thick wool are cleverly echoed by unwoven areas of warp.

The exhibition runs until March 30.

One of Jordanian artist Samia Zaru's works on display at the Jordan National Gallery in Amman.



PALIARD'S PAINTING: One of the paintings of the artist Olivia Paliard currently on display at the French Cultural Centre. The exhibition of Paliard's paintings opened on March 17 under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan Ali and will continue until March 28.



Her Majesty Queen Zain, the Queen Mother, poses with the children of the Um Al Hussein Orphanage Tuesday (Petra photo)

Queen Mother attends ceremony organised by Um Al Hussein Orphanage

AMMAN (Petra) — The Mabarat Um Al Hussein (Um Al Hussein Orphanage) held a ceremony at the Jordan Intercontinental Hotel in Amman Tuesday, on the occasion of Mothers' Day, under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Zain the Queen Mother.

Accompanied by Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, the Queen arrived at the ceremony and was greeted by cheering children of the orphanage and the orphanage secretary general, Mrs. Ihsan Al Zain and officials.

Mrs. Zain made a speech on

the occasion welcoming the Queen and paying tribute to her keenness on promoting charity works in Jordan, and caring for the homeless children.

One of the orphans spoke on behalf of the children expressing gratitude to the Queen for her care and support for their orphanage.

Later, the Queen announced the donation of JD 1,000 towards promoting the orphanage's activities and programmes.

The ceremony was attended by

Princesses, wives of the prime minister and cabinet ministers, and senior officials, members of the diplomatic missions and invited guests.

The audience donated JD 4,000 to the orphanage during the ceremony.

N. Yemeni health minister to arrive on March 30

AMMAN (Petra and J.T.) — North Yemen's Health Minister Mohammad Al Kabab is due here on March 30 on a visit to Jordan and talks on promoting bilateral cooperation in health-related fields.

The Yemeni minister, who will be accompanied by an official delegation, is expected to sign an agreement with Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh to regulate bilateral cooperation in implementing the minutes agreed upon during the Joint Jordanian-North Yemeni Higher Committee meeting held in Sanaa last month.

Hamzeh last week said that he will discuss the question of salaries for Jordanians employed in North Yemen during the delegation's visit to Jordan.

The minister said that between 160 and 170 Jordanian physicians and nearly 100 specialists will be employed in North Yemen and a date is yet to be fixed for the first batch of these doctors to leave for Sanaa.

Hamzeh said he invited the North Yemeni counterpart to discuss questions related to medical cooperation between the two countries.

North Yemen will be the second Arab country to conclude contracts for employing Jordanian doctors after Libya, which last month sent a team to Amman and selected more than 100 doctors to be employed in Libyan health centres and hospitals.

Arab Red Crescent societies support Palestinian uprising

AMMAN (Petra) — The Federation of Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies Executive Committee concluded meetings in Amman by issuing a statement expressing solidarity with the Palestinian uprising in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The statement urged all peace loving nations and world organisations to stop Israel's practices against the Arab population and appealed to Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross societies to extend all possible assistance to the Palestinian people under Israeli

rights violations against the Arab population.

According to the statement, the Executive Committee has set up a team to raise donations from Arab countries for the Palestinian people, with priority for families of martyrs or detained people and hospitalised patients.

The statement urged the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to intensify its activities inside the occupied Arab territories, to ensure the protection of civilians and to use its influence to end Israeli human

Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia in propagating the international humanitarian law, and decided to hold two seminars to help discuss this law in 1988 and 1989.

The committee recommended the establishment of a documentation centre for the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross societies and that these societies be allowed to use Arabic in all its official documents and official correspondence.

The statement said that a general meeting for Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross societies will be held in Cairo but did not give the date.

Taking part in the two-day meetings were representatives of Red Crescent societies in Jordan, Egypt, Mauritania, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.



PRINCE MOHAMMAD VISITS: His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, Tuesday called at the Ministry of Transport and Communications

where he was briefed by Transport Minister Khalid Al Haj Hassan on the progress of work at the ministry and its various departments (Petra photo)

Masri underlines Arab League role

TUNIS (Petra) — Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri Tuesday sent a cable to Arab League Secretary General Chadi Klibi underlining the role of the Arab League as a force for pooling Arab countries

efforts to achieve common goals.

In his cable marking the anniversary of the Arab League

establishment, Masri said that the anniversary falls at a time when the Palestinian people are involved in an uprising against Israeli occupation and atrocities and are seeking freedom.

He said: "Israel's oppression cannot and will not discourage the Palestinians from their course

of action to achieve liberation."

Masri referred to the Amman Arab summit where the Arabs achieved agreement and consensus and said that common goals

cannot be achieved without a collective Arab action at all fronts.

Nsour receives Finnish delegation

AMMAN — Arab Potash Company (APC) Director General Ali Nsour met in Amman with the visiting Finnish economic delegation led by Alec Aalto.

Nsour briefed the delegation members on the company's development and programmes at its Dead Sea plant, and the marketing of the company's potash around the world.



Transport and Communications Minister Khaled Al Haj Hassan holds talks with Assistant Arab League Secretary General for Economic Affairs Abdul Muhsen Zalzaleh in Amman Tuesday (Petra photo)

Haj Hassan, Zalzaleh discuss Arab satellite meeting in Syria

AMMAN (Petra) — Transport and Communications Minister Khalid Al Haj Hassan Tuesday discussed with Assistant Arab League Secretary General for Economic Affairs Abdul Muhsen Zalzaleh preparations for the forthcoming meetings of the Arab Satellite Communications Corporation General Assembly, which will be held in Damascus in April.

Haj Hassan stressed the importance of the general assembly meetings, saying they will provide a forum for intensified discussions on means to support satellite communications in the Arab World.

The meeting will focus on means for using Arabsat to intensify such contacts, in a bid to cope with the accelerating communication

tions revolution. The two officials also discussed the resolutions adopted at the Arab Transport Ministers Executive Bureau meetings which were held in Tunis recently, and the role of the Arab League in supporting the implementation of such resolutions.

The resolutions include manufacturing transport equipment and vehicles in the Arab World and the need for coordinating pan-Arab stands at the international arenas.

In a statement to Petra, Zalzaleh said the Arab League directs special attention to the transport and communications projects, in view of the major and significant role such projects play to achieve Arab economic integration.

Irbid doctors to attend workshop on forensic medicine

AMMAN (Petra) — A workshop on forensic medicine will open at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) near Irbid on April 9 and will be attended by doctors from the Irbid Governorate.

Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh will open the workshop which has been organised by JUST and the

Health Ministry. Participants in the four-day meetings will examine modern means of preparing reports on legal medical cases and dealing with injuries that could involve legal cases.

A group of specialists from JUST and the Health Ministry have prepared for the workshop.

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A loud, clear signal

THE shooting death of an Israeli soldier earlier this week could be a turning point in the tactics of the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It could also be a signal from the people of the occupied Arab territories that if four months of demonstrations, strikes and stone throwing are not enough to elicit recognition of their existence as serious interlocutors in a peace process, then they are prepared to escalate their struggle to more dangerous proportions to attain their objectives. Part and parcel of this message could be the rejection of the notion that the Palestinian uprising is being waged by rowdy teenagers whose political maturity and responsibility are so minimal that they cannot be taken seriously. This could be a gross error, with infinite implications.

We all recognise that any escalation would invite a counter-escalation, and thus the whole cycle of violence would suddenly shift into high gear, such that no known braking system would be able to stop it, much less reverse it. The time is therefore ripe to exercise the highest kind of statesmanship, to achieve justice and to reverse the tide of violence. Otherwise, it would be too late — Belfast-and-Beruit-like — for all men of good-will, and for well-intentioned leaders and parties, to sit around the negotiating table under the auspices of the United Nations, in order to resolve the Palestine conflict. A key order of business is for Israel to declare its readiness to engage the Arab parties in negotiations leading to Israeli withdrawal from all the Arab territories, on the basis of U.N. Resolution 242. As long as Israel remains silent on its commitment to implement that resolution, the revolt by the Palestinians under Israeli occupation will continue unabated, until it dawns on Israeli leaders that the status quo cannot continue with impunity. There is a clear lesson for Israel in all that is happening now in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including the shooting death of an Israeli soldier; we hope it will heed the message inherent in the escalation of the Palestinian struggle for recognition, liberation and self-determination.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: King pinpoints the threats

WHEN a nation is confronted with serious danger its people seek unity of ranks as the only means for defending itself. This was clear in King Hussein's address to the opening session of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) foreign ministers conference in Amman. The King pointed out the serious dangers posed to the Islamic nation and reminded his audience of the need for a pan-Islamic consensus and agreement on ways for confronting the dangers which are not threatening one country alone but all Arab and Islamic states. The King referred to Israel and South Africa which, he said, represent a challenge to the Muslims as they are backed by vast power, characterised with arrogance and are bent on their racial discrimination policies, denying other peoples their legitimate rights. A major part of the speech centred on the situation in the Israeli-occupied Arab territories where the King said the Palestinian people are maintaining their uprising against Israel's rule and struggling for freedom. The King paid tribute to the heroic resistance of the Arab people in the face of brutality and oppression exercised by Israeli troops, and called on the Islamic people of the world to extend all possible help to their brothers in Palestine to help them regain their freedom. The King also referred to the situation in the Gulf and called on Muslim nations to work diligently and seriously to end the conflict between Iraq and Iran.

Al Dustour: Islamic solidarity

KING Hussein addressed millions of Muslims Monday, calling for solidarity, cooperation and unity of ranks to serve Islamic causes. One of the most important issues for Islam at present the King said, was the continued occupation of Palestinian land and the atrocities of the Israelis against the Arab population. The uprising in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, he said, is a popular revolt expressing the Palestinian people's desire to acquire freedom and regain their land. The Islamic nations are called on to offer these freedom-fighters all possible aid so that the Palestinians can fulfil their aim. The King was careful to emphasise Jordan's total commitment to the Arab summit resolutions which among other things call for the convening of an international peace conference to deal with the Middle East question and help bring about freedom for the Palestinians in their own land. King Hussein pointed out another serious threat to the Muslim world represented in the Gulf war, and urged all Muslims to help end the bloodshed, expressing hope that Iran will respond to the calls of reason and peace, and help implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 598 which provides for a just settlement. The King's address to the Islamic foreign ministers meeting was in fact a call for conscience of people around the globe, and a reminder to Muslims to join their ranks and help establish the aspired peace.

Sawt Al Shaab: 4 points for OIC to consider

KING Hussein's address to the OIC foreign ministers conference on Monday underlined the following facts: First, that the Palestinian people are determined to regain their legitimate rights in their lands and to self-determination. This calls for the Arab and Islamic nations to provide all possible aid to the Palestinian people to help them achieve their aspired goals. Help should be extended now as the Palestinians are maintaining their uprising against Israeli occupation. Second, that the Jordanian position is firm and clear specially in the Kingdom's continued support for the Palestinians, and that Jordan is totally committed to the resolutions of Arab summit meetings which call for the convening of an international conference. Third, that the Gulf war presents a serious challenge to the Islamic nation and continues to sap the nation's resources. This war calls on the Islamic people to help implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 598 to bring back peace to the Gulf region. Fourth, that inter-Islamic efforts should be stepped up in helping Islamic African countries affected by drought and famine.

Is it time for a Keynesian yank?

By Nayef S. Zubi

THE consensus has been rapidly gelling over the course of the last year: The economy needs a substantive stimulus. Finally, a standard Keynesian fiscal stimulus is in place — a government spending doze. Keynesian economics and its collar: the Phillips curve — the presence of a trade-off between inflation and unemployment — pronounced dead in many quarters of the world, seems to be alive and well between the lines of the joint memorandum of the Central Bank of Jordan, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Trade. The current economic slowdown and the emerging unemployment problem calls for a policy mix of a government spending programme and an accommodating tax policy, especially in light of low levels of inflation rates, so the memorandum argues.

The measures taken by the government include:

First, a programme for public works that focuses upon building schools, health centres, and government buildings. The programme also calls for supporting moderate and low-income housing. It calls for making available loanable funds to specific economic sectors — Agricultural Credit Corporation, Villages Development Bank, and Agricultural Development Bank.

Second, a government spending programme of JD 25 million, of which 60 per cent would essentially underwrite bad investment decisions on the part of the Post Office Savings Fund, and on the part of investors in Jordan's Fertilizer Industrial Company. The other 40 per cent will be directed to pay for land bought from public.

Third, a programme for restructuring the activities of investment banking and money changers.

Fourth, a programme to attract foreign capital and foreign currency deposits.

Fifth, establishing a reinsurance company.

Sixth, a policy towards floating interest rates.

Seventh, reducing income taxes on revenues from renting houses and cutting water and electricity rates. to Jordan economic ills, some of the government's new policies would have positive effects, and they deserve a closer and more critical look. In this article, and in another to follow, the anatomy of government spending will be addressed from two different perspectives: A Keynesian perspective, which the government seems to adopt and an incentive perspective which the government appears to overlook. Another two articles will project the specific effects of the government spending measures. The restructuring of the investment banking and financial sector, and the policies directed toward attracting foreign capital will be the focus of other articles to follow.

Government policies and economic activity: The chemistry

Government policies can affect economic activity in three different ways. One, by purchasing the services of labour, capital, and other factors of production, it alters the supply of factors available to the private sector for productive purposes. Second, by direct purchase of goods and services and by altering the disposable income of households, it alters the aggregate demand for goods and services. Third, by changing the relative prices of factors and products, it alters the allocation of resources, as well as the long-run patterns of growth and distribution.

There is not much of a debate regarding the above. The debate, however, focuses on the degree of effectiveness of government spending programmes in bringing about intended results, namely increasing the level of output, employment, and production. The debate also focuses on their long-term adverse effects.

In the Keynesian framework, it is the level of aggregate demand that determines the level of output, employment, and production. Supply is omitted in its entirety. Increasing government spending would put purchasing power in the hands of the public and would eventually lead to an increase in the aggregate demand for goods and services that precipitates further rounds in a rather cascading fashion. In a layman's language, if the government spends on, for example, building a public school, the payments to the factors of

production — labour and capital will be partly spent. The recipients of this spending will also partly spend their incremental income, thus stimulating other economic sectors. And so, the process goes on. The first dinar spent by the government is born again and again, causing what has been labelled the "multiplier" effect. The initial one JD spent by the government, in effect, ends two or three JD's depending on the "multiplier."

In a Keynesian framework government policies — especially in a down economy — should be directed towards stimulating the two components of aggregate demand: the induced component — the income level dependent expenditure component and autonomous component — and the expenditure component that depends on factors other than income — stimulating aggregate is the "Midas Touch" for an ailing economy.

Government actions that are directed towards increasing investment, exports or government spending — the autonomous component will increase output, employment, and production. In a similar vein, government policies that are directed towards increasing consumption at the expense of savings or imports or tax payments will also increase output, employment, and production. From that follow the main recommendations of Keynesian economics:

— Pursue a policy of low interest rates via increases in the money supply to entice greater investment;

— Supplement private investments by public outlays;

— Increase government spending or lower taxes;

— Devalue currency to expand exports; and

— Devise a progressive tax system that would fall more heavily on savings and imports. Discouraging imports and penalising that portion of income that is saved is meant to increase consumption.

There is no argument that the recipients of the government spending increases will spend more than they otherwise would. As a result, they will be better off. But that only tells half the story. It is a partial analysis of the problem. The relevant question, however, is the effect on total spending of those who are required to finance the increase in government spending. Whether the government finances its spending by raising taxes, issuing more debt or simply printing money, those who are required to pay more taxes, purchase additional debt, or hold the increase in money, will do so only as a result of lowering their spending. In short, higher government spending will simultaneously lower the spending of those who are required to finance it.

The above premise only indicates that the net increase in the aggregate demand due to the income effect of government spending is ambiguous, if not negative. On the other hand, the substitution effects are not ambiguous. Higher government spending especially if in the form of transfer payments, or in the form of waste programmes, reduces the incentives of people and other factors of production to provide their services to the marketplace. Once the effort-reward link is severed, the effect on output would be rather negative. In fact, the eligibility for many government programmes requires the absence of work effort. It requires a myriad of a "means" test, "income" test administered by the government bureaucracy. What does it take to be eligible for a government loan guarantee? Simply passing an "Income Level" criterion.

The point the above argument brings home is simple: Income effects of government programmes cancel out. For every Abdulla, there is Tawfiq. What Abdulla — the recipient of government spending — spends, cancels out what Tawfiq — the one who finances government spending — abstains from spending. Remember, governments do not have resources they can claim their own. Not only income effect of government tend to cancel out, the substitution effect tends to diminish incentives in market activity. One would have no difficulty in envisaging a recipient abstaining at the margin from providing his labour in order to be eligible for a government programme. One also would have no difficulty in envisaging a situation where, at the margin again, a person who sees his marginal tax rates rising to finance government spending will abstain from providing his labour services. This anti-Keynesian argument will be the subject of the next article.

OPEN FORUM

... and justice for all

DURING the past month, Armenians have been on the march in Yerevan, the capital of the Soviet Armenian Republic, demanding the reunion of Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia. The marches were so massive the Kremlin leadership saw fit to send emissaries to Azerbaijan and Armenia to solve the dispute.

Also during the past month, the Azeris, who are the predominant ethnic group in Azerbaijan, sought out and murdered, raped and robbed Armenians in the town of Sangat, and ransacked their homes and shops and damaged their vehicles. All this because the Armenians were demanding what was originally theirs.

Throughout these events Armenians, trusting the new Soviet policy of glasnost and Gorbachev's sense of fair play, have apparently decided to wait for a final decision from the central government in Moscow. While the Armenians wait, the Soviet Communist Party newspaper Pravda attacks the leaders of the Armenian protests calling them "anti-socialists." Pravda says: "Thousands of threads have tied the Nagorno-Karabakh region to Azerbaijan over the past decades." If so, how come the vast majority of the disputed region want to rejoin Armenia? Furthermore, even if this has been true, who tied those threads? It is clear that since the early 1920s, the central government in Moscow has always favoured Azerbaijan over Armenia in its dealings with the region. After all, why would Moscow decide to give two Armenian territories — Karabakh and Nakhichevan — to Azerbaijan, if not to please one party over the other?

Pravda raises the issue of the future of the so called "fraternal union of the people." That fraternity is certainly questionable, as relations between Armenians and the Azerbaijanis have included antagonism and mistrust, including many clashes throughout the years. The relationship the Armenians had with their eastern neighbours, which Pravda calls fraternal, was largely dictated to them from Moscow, most of the time with difficulty because of the deep-rooted mistrust.

Pravda asks, what if the rest of the regions start satisfying their own interests? It should be noted that the Armenians are not satisfying their own interests. To do that, they would have to ask for their independence, which they are not, nor do they have any plans to do so, unless, perhaps, if their long-standing grievances are not addressed and they continue to be treated, in their eyes, like second-class citizens. As for now, Armenians are asking for what was rightfully theirs — Nagorno-Karabakh. They have no interest in other regions. This point should be well understood by Pravda and the Soviet central committee when they debate the Karabakh issue.

At this moment, all Armenians in the world are focusing their attention on Mr. Gorbachev and the Soviet leadership, to see what action they will take. Armenians in the West, who always had cordial relations with the Soviet Union, are waiting for justice to prevail in Karabakh, hoping that the Soviets will not fail them again, as they have done time and time again throughout the 60-year history of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Ara K. Voskan



Israeli settlers take up defensive positions in the occupied West Bank

Zionists entrench, ignoring message

By Jeffrey Bartholet

Reuter

ARIEL, West Bank — Where torches once announced the new moon across the ancient Jewish kingdom, burning rubber tyres now send plumes of smoke with a different message.

Haim Sprig, formerly from Chicago and now a Jewish settler in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, pays them no heed.

"We're absolutely happy," he said, shrugging off a 14-week Palestinian uprising, as he left behind in the United States.

"I feel I'm part of the historical Jewish people, which a feeling of oneness that cannot be explained."

Between 60,000 and 70,000 Jews have created 120 settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, lands occupied by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war and demanded by the Palestinians for a just settlement. The King's address to the Islamic foreign ministers meeting was in fact a call for conscience of people around the globe, and a reminder to Muslims to join their ranks and help establish the aspired peace.

KING Hussein's address to the OIC foreign ministers conference on Monday underlined the following facts: First, that the Palestinian people are determined to regain their legitimate rights in their lands and to self-determination. This calls for the Arab and Islamic nations to provide all possible aid to the Palestinian people to help them achieve their aspired goals. Help should be extended now as the Palestinians are maintaining their uprising against Israeli occupation.

Second, that the Jordanian position is firm and clear specially in the Kingdom's continued support for the Palestinians, and that Jordan is totally committed to the resolutions of Arab summit meetings which call for the convening of an international conference.

Third, that the Gulf war presents a serious challenge to the Islamic nation and continues to sap the nation's resources. This war calls on the Islamic people to help implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 598 to bring back peace to the Gulf region.

Fourth, that inter-Islamic efforts should be stepped up in helping Islamic African countries affected by drought and famine.

are an indivisible part of ancient Israel and essential to the survival of the modern state.

Haim Makovski, a 20-year resident of Israel and spokesman for the right-wing Gush Emunim organisation, directed a recent press tour of "Samaria," the ancient Jewish term for the northern section of the West Bank.

Many sites on the route had ancient names, which Makovski said evoked a sense of Jewish history come full circle.

Nablus is target

The city of Nablus, home to some 100,000 Palestinians, derived its name from the Greek Neapolis. Its earlier biblical name was Shechem.

The Israelis now put only Shechem on roadsigns in English, as if they were trying to write Nablus off the map.

"We see ourselves as the thorn in the conscience of the authorities," said Makovski. "We are the people who keep reminding our leadership, the land of Israel and the people are one and the same."

Once-barren hilltops are now speckled with hundreds of red roofs — a sign of Jewish habitation. On hillsides still bare, Palestinians frantically plant olive trees to proclaim possession.

The settlers said they had aerial photographs to prove such lands were once uncultivated. They avoided roads that ran through scores of crowded Palestinian towns and villages.

"It's a real nice place here," said Bill Adelman, a resident of

Ariel, not so much a settlement as a small town.

"A better idea would have been if we took the Arabs out of Shechem and threw them across the river. We could have settled there and wouldn't have had to tear this mountain apart," he said.

Ariel's planners hope that one day it will be the capital of Samaria and home to 70,000 Jews. A leaflet heralds it as "the city of tomorrow."

While many of its current 7,000 residents commute to work in Tel Aviv, construction is booming in a new industrial park connected to the settlement. Makovski said 100,000 square metres of working space would be available at bargain prices by this summer.

Already, there are two lock and security-door factories, a distillery, a spring factory, a thread and rope plant and a plastics industry, Makovski said.

Settlers struggled to emphasise an atmosphere of normality about their lives. Even though a military vehicle now escorts him through the nearby Palestinian town of Kalkilya, Sprig said the uprising did not affect him.

"I don't hesitate to invite my children to come and see me," he said.

Biblical atlas

Settlers used a Biblical atlas to justify on military grounds keeping the West Bank, and said it was as applicable today as it was for battles fought thousands of years ago.

The lesson of history was to control the ridge of hills running through the West Bank. From there, an enemy could look down on the "soft belly" of pre-1967 Israel, where the country was just 15 kilometres wide.

The settlers are convinced most Israelis know this lesson, and few are willing to sacrifice the high ground for a promise of peace.

Even the Labour Party, which espouses a land-for-peace platform, is not willing to return all of the occupied areas — the minimum demand of the Arabs.

The West Bank settlements began within months after the occupation of the area in 1967.

But the strong

Uprising leadership calls for attacks on soldiers and settlers

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Underground leaders of the uprising in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza have called on Palestinians to step up attacks on Israeli soldiers and Jewish settlers.

In a statement Monday, a day after the first Israeli soldier was killed in 14 weeks of protests, the United National Leadership of the Uprising called for "an escalation of protests against the Israeli army and the cowardly settlers by throwing stones, Molotov cocktails and iron bars."

It did not mention the use of firearms, previously barred by Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leaders.

An Israeli reservist was shot dead Sunday while patrolling in the West Bank town of Bethlehem.

The army announced Sunday that soldiers had been ordered to fire without warning on any protester hurling a petrol bomb.

OIC pledges support for Palestinian uprising

(Continued from page 1)

tional level as well as with individual member states to consolidate joint Islamic action and achieve the goals of the pan-Islamic body.

The representative of Kuwait, current chairman of the OIC, had special words of praise for Pizaza.

The representative, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mahmoud Al Usaimi, paid tribute to Pizaza for his "uniring efforts to strengthen the OIC and consolidate pan-Islamic action."

Usaimi urged the Islamic countries to adopt a clear and unequivocal stand towards ending the Gulf war.

He said that the war "is a bleeding wound for the Islamic Nation and it should be stopped by all means."

Kuwait has been exerting its efforts for ending the conflict and has participated in the formation of a delegation to maintain contact with Iran to stop the fighting. An implementation of the OIC summit in Kuwait but Tehran refused to receive the delegation, Usaimi noted.

He said Iran's refusal to implement Resolution 598 remains the stumbling block that impedes a peaceful settlement for the conflict. However, all efforts should be pursued to bring the fighting to an end, he said.

UAE

United Arab Emirates Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Rashed Abdullah called for an end to the Iran-Iraq war in line with Resolution 598 and described the war as a tragedy threatening the region and the whole Muslim Nation and the world."

He said the war "poses a threat to international peace and security and threatens international navigation."

Abdullah called for supporting the uprising in the occupied Arab territories and renewed commitment to the principles and decisions adopted during previous conferences on the Palestine question.

Egypt

Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abd El Meguid said peace "cannot be established as long as Arab people are subjected to oppression and occupation."

"Peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved unless a just solution for the Palestine problem is found," Abd El Meguid said.

He said the Palestinian uprising was a "revolt against oppression and an expression of the Arab population's determination to regain freedom."

Algeria

Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmad Taleb Al Ibrahim said that the United Nations Security Council serves as a suitable forum for resolving the Gulf conflict and that all parties should cooperate with the world organization to achieve that goal.

He said that Islamic countries should not lose hope or stop efforts to bring an end to the war, "which has caused so much suffering and destruction."

Turkey

Turkish Foreign Minister Mesut

the West Bank and Gaza to cease work and urged Palestinians "to start austerity measures and be ready for a long struggle."

It also called for a "Day of Repentance" March 29 when Arab collaborators with the Israeli authorities would be given a chance to hand back their weapons and "purify their conscience."

The leaflet also contained criticism of Syria for the first time, calling on President Hafez Al Assad "to correct relations between Syria and the PLO because there is no justification for the strife between comrades in one war against the enemies of the Arab people."

Palestinian sources said the statement bore the political hallmark of the PLO movement.

Some of the earlier leaflets were believed to have been drafted by the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), they said.

The leaflet ordered all Arab workers at Jewish settlements in



Armed Jewish settlers move in groups and the frequency of their attacks on Palestinians is steadily mounting

Text of statement on uprising

(Continued from page 1)

a new situation and exposes to the world the true nature of the Israel, with its fascist practices and its aggressive, expansionist goals, based on the evacuation and expulsion of the population, the torturing and jailing of citizens in addition to the destruction of houses, the confiscation of land and property, the setting up of colonialist settlements on confiscated land, and the continued aggression against the sacred Mosque of Al Aqsa and all the Muslim and Christian holy shrines in the Holy Land of Palestine.

The uprising brought about new evidence that unmasked Israel's real face which it hid behind false pretences of democracy. This led the majority of states the world over, as well as regional and international organisations, in addition to various media throughout the world to condemn the Israeli repressive practices against unarmed civilians; it further convinced the international community and world public opinion of the justice of the Palestinian cause and the paramount importance of putting an end to the Israeli occupation of Arab and Palestinian territories, foremost among which is the city of Al Quds Al Sharif. It also emphasised the urgency of reaching a peaceful, just, permanent and comprehensive settlement to the conflict, in such manner as would ensure the national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to return to their homeland and to self-determination.

Israel has to fully assimilate the lessons of history in the face of the new events and developments which have disproved the validity of the theory of secure borders which Israel has adopted as justification for perpetuating its occupation and annexation of territories thus violating the Charter of the United Nations, and U.N. Security Council resolutions as well as the principles of international law and the 1949 Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in times of war.

The 17th Islamic conference of foreign ministers of the OIC, while strongly condemning the campaign of repression, intimidation and murder launched by the Israeli forces against our Palestinian brothers, in the occupied Palestinian territories, in their desperate bid to crush their national uprising and stop them from claiming their national rights, appeals to all international and regional organisations and bodies to side with legitimacy and justice, in such manner as would put an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine, and ensure the liberation of Al Quds and the Blessed Mosque of Al Aqsa, and establish as well a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

The member states of the OIC reaffirm their determination to provide material, political and moral support to their brothers in the occupied Palestinian territories and to the PLO, the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people, to enable them to confront the occupation authorities and pursue their glorious uprising, inspired by what Allah (Exalted be His Name) has ordained:

"Among the believers are those who have fulfilled their pledges to Allah, and some have died and others are awaiting their hour, and neither could have changed their lot."

Palme killer might be Iranian hit-man

STOCKHOLM (R) — Murdered Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme may have been the victim of an Iranian hit squad, according to a book published in Sweden.

Author Henrik Westander, of Sweden's Peace and Arbitration Society, said Monday U.S. Tower Commission, which investigated the Iran-contra scandal, had confirmed that three Iranian hit men were sent to West Germany two months before the murder of Palme.

"Where was the hit-team the night Palme was killed?" Westander asked in his book, the *Bofors Swindles*.

The book discusses in detail a theory that Palme was murdered because he decided to stop deliveries from Sweden's largest arms producer Bofors to the Gulf a few months before.

"I am not saying Iran is definitely responsible. I am just saying that it hasn't been fully investigated," Westander said.

In the book, he names the Iranian government, Iranian fanatics and international arms-dealers of Iranian nationality as possible suspects.

Khartoum, SPLA near accord on relief in south

KHARTOUM (R) — The Sudanese government and southern-based rebels fighting its troops are close to an agreement on delivering relief supplies to guerrilla-held areas, senior foreign relief officials said Tuesday.

They said the government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) have been engaged for nearly two months in delicate and secret negotiations through third parties to secure an agreement to save the mainly animist and Christian south from mass starvation.

If concluded, it would be the first such agreement since the SPLA took up arms in 1983 to end what it calls the rule of a minority Muslim clique in Khartoum.

Hundreds of thousands of people are believed facing famine in an underdeveloped area devastated for nearly five years by the bush war and drought. Scores of deaths by diseases linked to malnutrition have been reported from the area in recent months.

Since the war broke out, an estimated two million people have fled the south to seek refuge and food in northern Sudan.

Ethiopia, itself hit by a severe drought and a long-running civil war, appealed Monday for international assistance to deal with an influx of 257,000 southern Sudanese who fled across the border into its territory.

The relief officials, close to the negotiations, said an estimated two million people have fled the south to seek refuge and food in northern Sudan.

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Air fares rise in Egypt

CAIRO (R) — Egyptians paid one-third more for air tickets Tuesday and the government tinkered with its exchange rate system in a sign it was swallowing economic medicine prescribed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Bankers and Western diplomats said a decision to scrap one of the rates at which the Egyptian pound is calculated against the dollar was a move towards unification of Egypt's exchange system long sought by the IMF.

The move, announced Monday by Economy Minister Youssri Mustapha, was also seen as an indication Egypt would continue to work with the IMF despite problems fulfilling its reform demands.

"It seems to be moving towards IMF terms and that should help another IMF agreement and Paris Club rescheduling," a Western banker said.

Egypt and the IMF signed a standby credits deal last May which paved the way for rescheduling by the "club" of Western creditor governments of payments on Egypt's \$43.9 billion debt from January 1987 until June 30.

The IMF has not given a public verdict on Cairo's economic reforms. But Western diplomats said it wanted more action to raise domestic interest rates, reduce subsidies, unify exchange rates and cut the budget deficit.

The government said it was retaining an artificially-low rate of 0.70 pounds to one dollar at which imports of subsidised wheat, flour, cooking oil, sugar and tea are priced.

This was in line with President Hosni Mubarak's pledge not to allow IMF-linked reforms burden the Arab World's largest, and possibly poorest, population by bearing the extra burden.

Following a secret review of Egypt's performance by senior IMF officials this month, fund experts were due to return to Cairo in early April, diplomats said.

A decision to raise the cost of air tickets by 33.3 per cent was independent of the exchange rate shift.

UNESCO cuts spending

HARARE (R) — UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor said Monday that he had introduced tough austerity measures to control the organisation's spending.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) had been criticised for alleged financial mismanagement under former director-general Mahtar M'Bow.

Mayor, who took over last year, told an airport news conference he had reduced the number of meetings, slashed paperwork and cut official trips.

He said the UNESCO general conference had asked him to make economies of \$2 million between Nov. 16 and Dec. 31 last

year to avoid a deficit.

"And this we made because I adopted very sharp measures of austerity concerning meetings that have been reduced in number and length by 25 per cent and by reducing all kinds of documentation by 50 per cent," he noted.

"I also adopted some measures concerning travel and all the activities of the organisation have been sharply reduced," he said.

Asked about members who have withdrawn from UNESCO, Mayor said he had written to them asking them to return.

The United States and Britain left UNESCO complaining the organisation had come under strong left-wing influence by Third World members.

Danes halt funding FAO

COPENHAGEN (R) — Denmark said Monday it will immediately withhold financial support from the Rome-based United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) pending reform of the agency.

"We consider that FAO is being run in an excessively bureaucratic, centralist and dictatorial fashion under its Lebanese Director-General Edouard Saouma and have decided to suspend support for new

Egyptian and foreign airlines had long been promised a one-third increase when the government abolished the commercial rate at which fares were calculated, airline officials said.

In scrapping the commercial rate, the government also set a new rate for customs duties of 1.89 pounds to one dollar so as not to increase the cost of imports.

Western diplomats said this might upset the IMF, but the changes were on the whole in line with what it wanted.

They said it would facilitate a new application by Cairo for Paris Club rescheduling of debt payments from next July until the end of 1989 which would have been hard if the IMF agreement had gone wrong.

But the exchange rate changes in fact brought Egypt into line with its commitments to the fund on this score three months earlier than the formal deadline of June 30, one diplomat said.

Bankers said there would be no major inflationary impact except on air travellers — clearly judged by the government as capable of bearing the extra burden.

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Saudis to raise capacity of oil pipeline to Red Sea

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Saudi Arabia will increase the capacity of a pipeline transporting crude oil from fields on the Gulf to a port on the Red Sea by 55 percent, an oil newsletter reported Monday.

Expansion of the cross-country facility to five million barrels a day "will make Saudi Arabia virtually independent of the Gulf for its crude oil exports, if the need arises," the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) reported.

The newsletter said the Saudi project substantially upgrades the Red Sea as one of the world's oil exporting centres.

Iraq currently sends more than 500,000 barrels a day across Saudi Arabia to the Red Sea by a connection into the Saudi pipeline called Petroleum. However it is building its own pipeline to Petroleum's terminal at Yanbu.

The Iraqi pipeline will have a capacity of 1.6 barrels a day when completed in September, 1989.

"A plan for a pipeline linking Kuwait to the Red Sea coast of Saudi Arabia is also reported to be under consideration," MEES reported.

Iraqi sulphur company announces record production

BAGHDAD (AP) — A major Iraqi plant for sulphur mining and production has announced a record sulphur production of 500,000 tonnes, a government daily reported Monday.

The Baghdad Observer, Iraq's only English-language newspaper, quoted senior officials at the Mishraq Sulphur Enterprise as saying the output in mine sulphur increased by 10 per cent in 1987.

Another increase is expected to raise the half-a-million-tonne output to 650,000 this year.

Iraq's mineral resources include sulphur and phosphate rock besides oil. The sulphur was mined at Mishraq, near the

Royal Jordanian to fly directly to two Indian cities this summer

AMMAN (J.T.) — Royal Jordanian (RJ) will start direct flights between Amman-New Delhi and Amman-Calcutta as of the coming summer, according to an official RJ announcement Tuesday.

The announcement said that the move is designed to help bolster Jordanian-Indian relations and promote tourist and economic ties between the two countries.

The RJ announcement did not disclose the number of flights nor the exact date for starting the operations.

officials on operating a direct air link between India and Jordan.

The visit resulted in the signing of a tentative memorandum of understanding to bolster bilateral cooperation in air transport.

The memorandum provides for RJ to operate a weekly flight between Amman and New Delhi and a weekly flight from Amman to Calcutta.

The RJ announcement did not disclose the number of flights nor the exact date for starting the operations.

Cabinet ratifies industrial compound fertilizers project

AMMAN — The cabinet has decided to consider a new project by the Jordan-Kuwait Agricultural Products Company as a ratified agricultural project, entitling it to all benefits and exemptions provided for by the Jordanian Law on the Encouragement of Investments.

According to a report in Al Ra'i Arabic newspaper the cabinet took the decision upon recommendation from a special committee on investments working for the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply.

The project, set up in Aqaba, is for the production of industrial compound fertilizers.

The company began operations in Jordan in 1985 with a JD 4 million capital.

Tarawneh explains to car dealers tax assessments

AMMAN (J.T.) — Income Tax Department Director Salman Al Tarawneh met recently with representatives of car and spare part dealers at the Amman Chamber of Commerce and responded to questions relating to the self assessment forms and basis of tax assessment.

The major topics discussed during the meeting were as follows, according to Tax Brief, a publication issued by the Jordanian accounting firm Dajani and Alaeedain.

A — Custom duties differentials: Custom duties differentials become due in some cases in relation to goods imported and cleared in prior years and which upon revaluation are subjected to additional custom duties in subsequent tax years. Such differentials were disallowed by tax assessors since they relate to a prior tax year. Tarawneh promised that such differentials would be allowed in the year of payment.

B — Penalties:

These are penalties paid by taxpayers in relation to agreements and contracts. Tarawneh reported.

Oil and gold prices dip

LONDON (R) — Oil prices slipped Tuesday and gold prices dipped as well, as traders started betting that OPEC was not yet willing to act to cut a world petroleum glut.

Moved by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to reduce the surplus of oil could bring prices up, they believe. That could rekindle inflation.

But OPEC President Rilwan Lukman postponed a news conference, due for Tuesday, at which some traders had speculated he might announce new measures to end the glut.

Their first response to news of the postponement was to start selling oil. Then the price of gold, a traditional hedge against inflation, started slipping.

The price of Brent crude oil from the North sea, a benchmark grade traded around the world, quickly shed more than 20 cents on that news, to sell at \$14.90 a barrel for May delivery. It had already been sliding from Monday's peaks of \$15.35.

Gold, which jumped sharply Monday on worries about inflation, shed more than \$1 an ounce, to trade around \$448 at midday, having been fixed in London Tuesday morning at \$449.25.

But the dollar was hardly changed at 1.69 Deutschemarks and 127 yen in Europe Tuesday morning. It traded at \$1.83 to the British pound sterling.

W. German government sells stake in V.W.

BONN (R) — The West German government said Monday it was selling its 16 per cent stake in carmaker Volkswagen (V.W.) A.G., half a century after the state created the firm with the goal of providing every German family with a car.

Following weeks of market speculation that the V.W. sale would come before Easter, the government said it would offer its 4.8 million ordinary shares to the public at 238 marks (\$142) per share from Thursday.

V.W.'s share price slipped on the news in unofficial after-hours

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

Activity on the Amman Financial Market for Tuesday, March 22, 1988.

	Number	Volume	Contracts
Regular market:	217627	JD 255829	363
Top three companies:			
Intermediate Petrochemical Industries	40394	JD 58246	41
Jordan-French Insurance	6389	JD 32682	7
Universal Chemical Industries	16800	JD 29879	120
Parallel Market:	24603	JD 13725	—
Development bonds:	—	—	—
Treasury bills & bonds:	—	—	—

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One Sterling	1.8285/95	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.2480/90	Canadian dollar
	1.6915/22	Deutschmarks
	1.8995/9005	Dutch guilders
	1.3980/900	Swiss francs
	35.34/39	Belgian francs
	5.7500/30	French francs
	1252/1253	Italian lire
	127.17/27	Japanese yen
	5.9720/70	Swedish crowns
	6.3680/3730	Norwegian crowns
	6.4925/75	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	448.60/449.10	U.S. dollars

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — Shares closed weaker after investors took profits in all sectors following three days of strong gains. The All Ordinaries index fell 12.9 to 4,149.7.

TOKYO — Shares closed lower in robust trade due to profit-taking caused by Wall Street's tumble overnight, a wavering dollar and lack of fresh incentives. The Nikkei index fell 123.51 to 25,842.75.

HONG KONG — Shares ended marginally lower, spurred by light profit-taking on good corporate results. The Hang Seng index slid eight points to 2,594.80.

SINGAPORE — Share prices closed moderately lower across the board as cautious investors took profits in fairly quiet trade. The Straits Times industrial index fell 11.60 points to 957.85 from Monday's close.

FRANKFURT — Shares ended in thin bourse mostly easier although carmaker Volkswagen bucked the trend, rising 4.80 marks to end at 245.60. Commerzbank's 60-share index, calculated at mid-session, fell 7.7 points to 1,436.7.

PARIS — Shares opened the main session lower in quiet trading with most major investors sidelined. The 50-share indicator dropped 1.36 per cent early in the session.

ZURICH — Shares ended mostly easier on moderate turnover, with mild profit-taking. The Swiss index fell nine to 850.5 points.

LONDON — Prices were mixed with an easier bias as the market continued this week's lacklustre trend. Volume continued depressed. At 1530 GMT, the FTSE 100 index was 4.3 points lower at 1,836.8.

NEW YORK — Wall Street gave up its modest early gains and turned mixed. The Dow 30 index was up one at 2,068.30 after rising to 2,074.

Chinese praises capitalism

HONG KONG (R) — Capitalism was mankind's greatest invention and communists should learn from it, China's chief representative in Hong Kong was quoted as saying Tuesday.

"Some of our comrades are afraid of capitalism because they know very little about it," said Xu Jiajun, head of the New China News Agency's Hong Kong branch — Peking's de facto embassy in the British colony.

"These comrades do not realise that capitalism has also changed a lot since Karl Marx. In fact, the modern capitalist system is the greatest invention in the civilisation of mankind," he said.

Xu said in an interview printed in the pro-Peking Hong Kong newspaper, Wen Wei Po, that fear of capitalism had led to great economic losses for China in the



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Lions battle today in Africa Nations Cup

CASABLANCA (R) — Morocco, the Lions of the Atlas, roared on by 80,000 highly partisan supporters, meet the Indomitable Lions of Cameroon in the semi-finals of the Africa Nations Cup soccer tournament Wednesday.

The host nation are confident of advancing to the finals where they will meet the winners of the other semi-final battle between the Green Eagles of Nigeria and Algeria.

Their wily "Brazilian" coach, Jose Mehdi Faria, is happy with his team's success in finishing top of Group A and he should have a strong line-up against Cameroon, second-placed finishers in Group B.

"We will win this tournament."



Badou Zaki



Mohamed Timouni

Timouni of Belgian club Lokeren who was injured in the first game against Zaire.

Dolmy, at 35 the old man of the squad has missed all the games so far through injury. His recovery provides Faria with an extra wise head on which he can draw.

After their 0-0 draw with Ivory Coast Saturday, Krimau told reporters: "With Dolmy and Timouni, we will do the same in the semi-finals as we did against Algeria."

Cameroun, pipped by Nigeria to first place in Group B, could be heading for their third consecutive Africa Nations Cup soccer final.

The "Indomitable Lions" won the trophy in 1984 and were beaten in a penalty shoot-out with Egypt in 1986.

French coach Claude Le Roy would have preferred to win Group B and then stay in Rabat for a semi-final clash with Algeria.

"The players were already thinking of the semi-finals," he said. "We respect Morocco and our team will be very well prepared for this match."

The semi-final in Rabat also pitches black Africa against the Arab north. Algeria, who have never won the Africa Nations Cup, want revenge against Nigeria's Green Eagles for depriving them of a place at this summer's Olympic Games.

The North Africans might also remember their only previous appearance in the final — Nigeria won 3-0 in Lagos in 1980.

Nigeria's Peter Rutai — one of the best goalkeepers in Africa — believes his side can lift the trophy for a second time. "There is no problem. We are ready," he said.

Nigeria and Algeria play contrasting styles of football. The Green Eagles rely more on speed and individual skill while the Algerians have a more collective game.

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SHARIF
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FALSECARDING MADE EASY

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♦ K J 3 2
♦ K J 4 3
♦ Q 5
♦ Q 8 2

WEST
♦ A 9 8
♦ Q 8 2
♦ J 6 3
♦ A K J 5

SOUTH
♦ Q 7 6 4
♦ Q 9 8
♦ A 7 6 5
♦ A 7 6 5

The bidding:

South West North East
1 Pass 1 Pass
1+ Pass 3+ Pass
4+ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♦

What would you think about a book on deceptive plays that starts off with the advice: "Don't bother with them"? To illustrate his point, the author cites this hand.

The bidding is routine. North's raise to three spades is invitational and South has the minimum for acceptance.

You lead the king of clubs and partner plays the three. There is no way you are going to beat this on high cards, but there may be a way to promote a trump trick. Three things must happen: 1. Clubs must be 4-3-3-3; 2. Partner must have the ten of spades; 3. Declarer must lead a spade from dummy to his

queen.

"If all this happens, you will win the first round of spades and lead the 13th club. This will promote a trump trick. All this happening is against the odds, but something is better than nothing."

"Putting it into practice, you continue with the ace of clubs and another. Declarer wins and leads a spade to his queen and your ace."

The good news is that partner has the ten of spades. The bad news is he has just played it. When you lead the jack of clubs, declarer guesses the position and makes the rest. What went wrong?

The answer is that partner was falsecarding ... He played the ten hoping to discourage declarer from finessing in spades if the situation were:

♦ K J 3 2
♦ A 9 8
♦ A 7 6 5

Partner was trying to do a good thing. It just happened that, on this occasion, it cost a game contract.

Why, then, should you buy the book? ("Falsecards," by Mike Lawrence, Devlyn Press, paperback, 215 pp. Available from The Bridge World, 39 West 94th St., New York, NY 10025-7124 \$995 post free) Because there are many situations where falsecards are obligatory, and these are analyzed in depth by one of the finest player-writers in the game today. It was most informative.

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 1988

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

From the Carol Righter Institute

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You will be able to "tune in" on new arrangements and changes through logical planning this morning, so strike while the iron is hot. Don't allow an associate to upset your schedule and your mood.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Don't rely on your friends or colleagues in handling an important business venture. Take it easy at home tonight, and get plenty of rest.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Don't do anything which could imperil a highly valued friendship. You will have an opportunity to improve your financial situation.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Keep busy at the work you have committed yourself to, and avoid being a burden to others. Get plenty of rest tonight.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) Have a discussion with an expert about a future investment opportunity, but save some money for possible emergencies.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Put your personal desires on the back burner until you have completed more pressing obligations. Avoid a nervous pal who will waste your time.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Take

some time for a relaxing recreation with your good friends. This is not a good time to ask your superiors for any big favors.

LIBRA (Sep. 23 to Oct. 22) Don't become involved in any new projects until you have finished those you have already begun. Follow the advice of a financial expert.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Your communication abilities will be unusually keen this morning, but avoid a silly argument with your mate over money tonight.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Focus your attention on practical matters today, and steer clear of an angry associate. Don't do anything to upset a superior.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Don't argue with a co-worker, as this person may be purposely trying to start a fight. Use your good judgment and remain calm.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Listen to your mate's ideas, and establish more harmony at home. Handle your practical affairs, and don't run off on any wild tangents.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Don't just sit around doing nothing tonight; go out and visit some good friends, but be sure you drive with the utmost care on the highways.

Ritchie charged with offensive behaviour

PERTH (R) — Former Australian test cricketer Greg Ritchie has been charged with offensive behaviour on the same flight on which England all-rounder Ian Botham is said to have grabbed a passenger in a headlock. Police said Ritchie, Botham's Queensland team-mate, will appear in court Wednesday. The charge against Ritchie relates to an alleged incident on the flight from Melbourne to Perth March 15, after which Botham was charged with assault. Botham's case was on March 17 adjourned until Wednesday. He faces two charges of assault and one charge of disorderly conduct. Botham, who was not asked to plead, was released on bail.

Panel formed to help U.S. efforts to host World Cup

WASHINGTON (AP) — A 16-member advisory panel, chaired by former secretary of state Henry Kissinger, has been formed to help the United States' efforts to land soccer's World Cup Championship in 1994, it was announced Monday. The announcement was made by Paul Steihl, director of World Cup USA 1994, Inc., which is coordinating the project on behalf of the U.S. Soccer Federation. Kissinger will serve as chairman. Drew Lewis, former secretary of transportation, and Steven J. Ross, chairman of Warner Communications, will serve as vice chairmen. Brazil and Morocco also are candidates for the 1994 World Cup. A decision will be announced July 4 this year by FIFA, soccer's world governing body.

Mecir, Connors reach Florida tennis quarterfinals

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (R) — Miloslav Mecir of Czechoslovakia and American Jimmy Connors moved into the quarterfinals with straight-set victories Monday at the \$2.1 million International Players Tennis Tournament.

Chris Evert also advanced, but she drew more attention with the announcement that she would marry former skier Andy Mills within the year.

The third-seeded Mecir ended the bid of 14th-seed Mikael Pernfors of Sweden 7-5, 6-0, 6-2.

The match had 13 service breaks in 18 games as both players successfully attacked their opponents' second serve throughout the 61 minute match.

Evert fell behind a service break in the second set at 1-2, but produced several strong passing shots to win the last five games of the match.

"I wasn't distracted by anything," said Evert, 33. "I just didn't play as well as I have in my last three matches. I think everything will blend together now that this (her engagement) is out in the open."

Connors served-and-voleyed more than usual to avoid engaging in long baseline rallies with Mansdorf, 23rd in the world. The 35-year-old Connors said that he tries to avoid long matches so he can recover properly for his next match.

Seventh-seeded Anders Jarryd of Sweden moved into the quarterfinals with his victory over Guy Forget of France 6-2, 6-4, 7-6 and fifth-seed Helena Sukova of Czechoslovakia overpowered 12th-seed Raffaella Reggi of Italy 6-3, 6-0.

Tomba leads after 1st run of slalom race

OPPDAL, Norway (AP) — Double Olympic champion Alberto Tomba of Italy, chasing his first overall World Cup title, took a clear lead after the first run of the men's slalom race Tuesday.

Tomba, who started 11th among 68 entries, posted the best intermediate time halfway and flashed down in 57.30 seconds at the finish.

Grega Benedik of Yugoslavia, only fourth halfway, was runner-up 0.43 seconds behind Tomba at the finish in 57.73, and Paul Frommelt of Liechtenstein came in third in 57.86 seconds.

Rudolf Nierlich of Austria was fourth in 58.36 seconds and World Cup title defender Pernfors of Switzerland was fifth in 58.42.

Swedish veteran Ingemar Sten-

China to host '90 volleyball championships

PEKING (R) — Defending champions China will host the next women's World Volleyball Championships in 1990. Ruden Acoata, president of the World Volleyball Federation, said Tuesday.

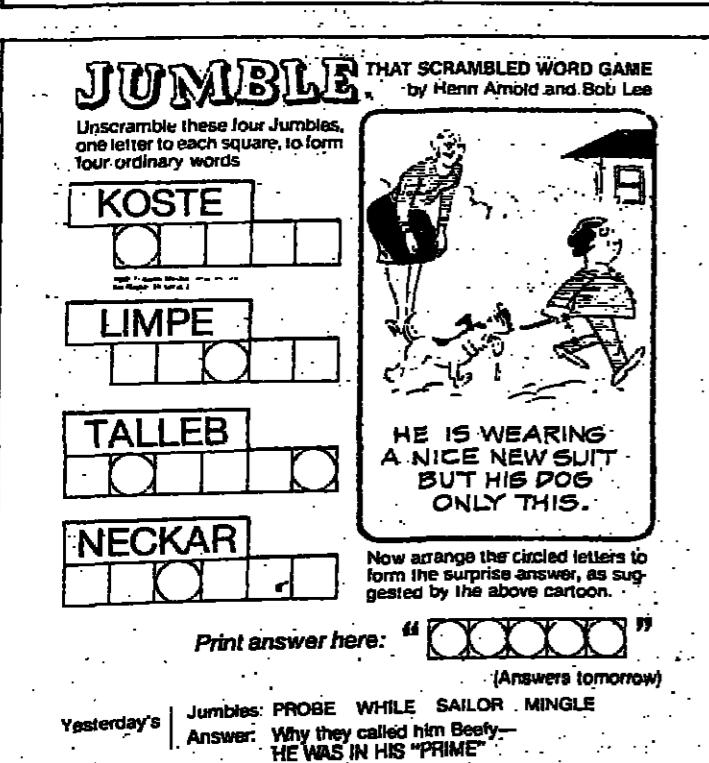
Peanuts



Mutt'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PROBE WHILE SAILOR MINGLE
Answer: Why they called him Beafy — HE WAS IN HIS "PRIME"

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U.S., opposition reject Noriega's resignation offer

PANAMA CITY (R) — Beleaguered military ruler General Manuel Antonio Noriega has offered to step down as head of the armed forces before general elections next year, but the olive branch was rejected by the opposition and the U.S. government.

Panamanian Acting President Manuel Solis Palma announced in a televised address Monday night, saying it was conditional on the results of a national dialogue with all the country's political forces.

Noriega's move was rejected by the opposition and the U.S. government, which want him to leave the country.

U.S. State Department Spokeswoman Anita Stockman said in Washington: "We believe the offer is little more than a ploy... and an effort on the part of Noriega to maintain direct or indirect control of the Panamanian Defence Forces."

Leaders of the National Civic Crusade, which organised a general strike Monday that crippled the country's two major cities, said the offer did not change the situation and the strike would continue.

The strike will go on'

"Our position is the same it's always been. We are ready to talk

directing his comments at American television cameras.

Noriega, chief of the 16,000-strong army and Panama's de facto ruler since late 1983, was indicted last month in Florida on drug-running and racketeering charges.

U.S. sanctions aimed against Noriega have thrown Panama's economy into near-chaos and widened domestic opposition against him.

Blunt rejection

In Washington, rejection of Noriega's offer to resign was blunt. "We stand by our previous view that Noriega should go and the sooner the better for Panama," Stockman said.

"Noriega is the problem and his preoccupation with remaining on the scene despite overwhelming domestic opposition will only ensure continued economic and political instability there," she said.

She described Noriega's call for a dialogue with the opposition as an attempt to legitimise Solis Palma's government.

The United States recognises Eric Arturo Delvalle as president even though the Panamanian National Assembly ousted him when he tried to dismiss Noriega.

Noriega's offer followed White House statements that Washington was no longer prepared to negotiate the general's voluntary departure from Panama.

On Friday, Noriega rejected a U.S. proposal that he accept political asylum in Spain. As part of that plan, Washington said it would not seek his extradition to face criminal charges in the United States. I accuse the State Department of trying to create another Vietnam," Noriega said.

"The strike will go on'

"Our position is the same it's always been. We are ready to talk

Border tension eases between Honduras, Nicaragua

TEGUCIGALPA (Agencies) — Border tension between Honduras and Nicaragua eased Tuesday after Honduras said Sandinista intruders had gone home, and Nicaragua agreed to a limited ceasefire with contra rebels.

Honduran troops said they reached the scene of reported clashes between Nicaraguan soldiers and contras. They found mines and evidence of heavy fighting, but no Sandinistas.

Soon after, the more than

3,000 airlifted American soldiers in Honduras suffered their first casualties.

10 U.S. soldiers injured

Ten U.S. soldiers were injured, none seriously, when their light Huey helicopter crashed during manoeuvres at Jutigalpa, 55 kilometres from the Nicaraguan border.

Bickering continued as Tegucigalpa rejected Managua's charges that Honduran warplanes flew 100 kilometres deep into Nicaraguan territory.

But the conflict appeared to have been transferred to diplomatic ground. Honduras again rejected as unnecessary the visit of a United Nations fact-finding mission scheduled to visit Nicaragua Wednesday to investigate the clashes with contras.

Honduran Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Contreras told Reuters Central American peace accords already had established ways of checking violations.

He said he would attend a meeting of the five Central American countries in Guatemala Wednesday to turn Nicaragua, which is taking Honduras to the World Court in The Hague, into the accused rather than the procurer.

Lopez Contreras said Nicaragua had dropped its charge against Honduras of harbouring armed rebels to clear the way for the accords, and taking it up again would only interfere with the peace process.

He also took the Contadora Group of nations to task for planning to denounce in a U.N. Security Council meeting Tuesday the U.S. airift to Honduras and almost fail to condemn the Nicaraguan incursion.

He accused his counterparts in the five-nation group seeking peace in Central America of bias.

U.N. team to leave

Meanwhile, at the United Nations, a fact-finding team was to leave Tuesday for Nicaragua to investigate the recent border clashes.

The delegation, sent at the request of the Nicaraguan government, was to include two diplomats and two military observers, the United Nations announced.

The delegation was to be limited to observing conditions in Nicaragua, said a U.N. statement released Monday.

Hepatitis epidemic worse than reported in China

PEKING (AP) — Nearly 300,000 people have become sick and 11 have died in Shanghai's 2-month-old hepatitis epidemic, with about 800 more people falling ill each day, an official report said Tuesday. The highest figures Chinese officials released previously were 16,000 ill and seven dead, but Western doctors visiting Shanghai have insisted the epidemic is much worse.

WORLD NEWS BRIEFS

India: No nuclear bombs

NEW DELHI (R) — An Indian government spokesman dismissed Monday a news report from Washington that India has built about 20 highly sophisticated nuclear bombs. "It does not even merit a comment," an External Affairs Ministry spokesman told reporters querying the report from Washington by a news agency (not Reuters) that the low-yield bombs could be delivered by combat aircraft. He repeated the comment by India's ambassador to the United States, P.K. Kaul, who had told reporters "It is a figment of imagination." India exploded its first nuclear device in 1974 but it has always denied it has actually assembled nuclear weapons.

Tokyo police search following bombings

TOKYO (R) — Police Tuesday searched the headquarters of a leftist radical group after two bombs exploded in central Tokyo Monday evening. Police officials said they had searched the offices of the Central Core Faction (Chukaku-ha) in connection with a rocket attack in January against Tokyo's main airport at Narita. They declined to comment on whether the search was related to Monday's explosions, which damaged several vehicles and smashed a number of windows. The police also declined to confirm media reports that the explosions were caused by time bombs laid by a radical group opposed to expansion plans for Narita Airport, 60 kilometres northeast of Tokyo. No group has yet claimed responsibility for Monday's explosions.

Sikhs blast police post with rocket

AMRITSAR, India (R) — Sikh militants used rockets successfully for the first time Monday night in an attack on a paramilitary post in Punjab state, police said. About 50 paramilitary police were camped in the grounds of a temple at Phagwara, when a rocket blew a hole in the outer wall. The extremists fired two rockets at the temple about 100 kilometres from the Sikh holy city of Amritsar. Only one exploded and nobody was injured. Police said it was the first time Sikh militants fighting for an independent state had successfully exploded a rocket.

Cabinet shake-up in Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — No major economic or foreign policy changes are expected in the wake of a cabinet shake-up in which almost half of President Suharto's former ministers were dropped. Only 18 ministers of the previous 40-member cabinet were given assignments in the new one Monday. Suharto said the changes he announced on national television were designed to continue established policies and infuse new blood. "The new cabinet will ensure the continuation of past policies as well as tackle the problem of regeneration (of Indonesia's leadership)," Suharto said. Among those replaced were Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Ali Wardhana, Mines and Energy Minister Subroto and Foreign Minister Mochtar Kusumaatmadja. Veteran Finance Minister Radius Prawiro, 59, will be sworn in Wednesday to succeed Wardhana as economic czar.

Judge to visit alleged 'torture colony'

SANTIAGO, Chile (R) — A mysterious colony of German immigrants, accused of collaborating in the torture of Chilean political prisoners, will be visited next month for the first time by a local judge, legal sources said Monday. The visit to the Colonia de la Dignidad (dignity), set for April 28, follows headlines in West Germany recently after gruesome testimony by former inmates about alleged conditions behind the camp's barbed wire fences and electronic gates. A West German court requested the inspection in connection with a 10-year-old libel action brought by the colony against Amnesty International, which accused Dignidad of aiding secret police torturing detainees after the 1973 military coup which brought Chilean President Augusto Pinochet to power. Amnesty lawyer Maximo Pacheco told Reuters he learned of the visit from court officials at Parral, where the colony of some 350 inmates is located, 400 kilometres south of Santiago in the foothills of the Andes.

Ceasefire agreed for duration of Nicaraguan peace talks

SAPOA, Nicaragua (R) — The Nicaraguan government and U.S.-backed contra rebels have agreed on a ceasefire for the duration of peace talks, scheduled to last until Wednesday.

Both sides exuded optimism after the first day of talks in this border town, aimed at ending the seven-year-old conflict.

"It has been an important day," said Nicaraguan Defence Minister Humberto Ortega, leader of the government delegation, after the first meeting Monday in Sapoa, 140 kilometres south of Managua near the Costa Rican border.

"After coming out of the talks, we did feel we had accomplished something," Adolfo Calero, the rebels' political leader said in a press conference.

The contras had demanded progress in talks between Ortega and the opposition as a precondition for reaching a long-term ceasefire accord with the Sandinista government.

The agreement with eight mostly centrist and leftist political parties commits the government to give them access to the media and maintain political dialogue.

Six other mostly conservative parties declined to sign the accord although they participated in the talks leading up to the agreement.

Both the peace talks and Ortega's dialogue with the opposition parties are mandated in a Central American peace accord he signed with the presidents of four other Central American nations last August.

The Sapoa peace talks were the first since the Sandinistas launched an offensive last week against contra positions along the northern border with Honduras.

COLUMN 8

AIDS kills over 400 Australians

SYDNEY (R) — More than 400 people, including seven children, have died of AIDS in Australia since the killer disease was detected here six years ago, according to official statistics released Tuesday. Most of the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome cases were reported in New South Wales, the country's most populous state, which includes Sydney. The figures from the National Health and Medical Research Council showed 418 of the 795 AIDS victims, mostly aged between 20 and 49, have died. The majority of AIDS sufferers were homosexuals.

Teenage brides want out

LONDON (R) — Two British women, who claim they were sold as teenage brides in North Yemen, are seeking divorces so they may return to Britain, the British Foreign Office said Monday. A spokesman could not say when the divorces would take place, but a British newspaper said that Zana Muhsen, 23, was due to get a decree Monday. As a condition of her divorce she must leave her infant son behind. The Observer newspaper quoted Zana as saying she would be free to go home after the divorce but would not leave until her younger sister, 22-year-old Nadia, was allowed to travel with her. Nadia cannot leave because her husband refuses to grant her a quick divorce, and under Yemeni law, no married woman can leave the country without her husband's permission.

Crisis convention

Meanwhile, Anglican church leaders held a crisis convention Tuesday to rally behind black Archbishop Desmond Tutu in his conflict with South Africa's white-led government.

Armenians resume protests

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) — Two blacks were killed, seven injured and 39 arrested during a nationwide protest strike that sparked the most extensive violence this year, police reported Tuesday.

Dozens of buses, delivery vans and private cars were stoned or firebombed Monday, the 28th anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre, and security forces used tear gas, rubber bullets, birdshot and dogs to disperse rioters, police headquarters said.

Police said the two deaths and five of the injuries resulted from attacks by blacks on blacks. Two blacks were injured by police.

Several of those arrested were trying to prevent children from going to school and workers from going to their jobs, police said.

The protest strike was organised by anti-apartheid activists in defiance of emergency regulations barring calls for such actions.

Hundreds of thousands of black workers and students stayed away from jobs and classes, both to mark the anniversary of the 1960 police shootings of 69 blacks in Sharpeville and to protest the recent bannings of black opposition groups.

The Star of Johannesburg, the country's largest daily newspaper, said protest strikes would continue "as long as grievances are not directly addressed."

"Instead of tension being relieved through the extension of rights and the removal of restrictions, each new round of protests is met with further clampings which inevitably lead to fresh protests," it said.

Anti-apartheid paper banned

On Tuesday, the South African government banned the anti-apartheid weekly newspaper the New Nation, which has backing from the Roman Catholic Church, making it the first victim of censorship laws decreed last

August.

The ban, announced in the government gazette, runs until June 10 and is renewable. The action followed the defeat Monday of a court challenge by the weekly to state of emergency censorship powers.

New Nation had a circulation of about 60,000 and a much larger readership.

No reason was announced for the ban but government lawyers had previously complained that the paper promoted revolution with its coverage of black leaders and engendered hostility towards police and the army.

In an unprecedented move, bishops were hurriedly summoned from across southern Africa to a Johannesburg airport hotel to discuss the church-state confrontation with an envoy of Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie.

The envoy, Bishop of Lichfield Keith Sutton, declared that Tutu — a repeated target of criticism and ridicule by South African whites and state-run media — had the church's full support.

"I see him as a shepherd of the people and defender of the faith," Sutton said.

He praised the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner for continuing to preach non-violence to frustrate blacks struggling to end South Africa's apartheid race segregation.

Twelve bishops, black and white, attended the convention which follows mounting attacks on the church from government ministers. Six others failed to arrive on time.

It is the first time Aquino has moved to institute major changes in the way the 160,000-strong regular military machine operates.

The pledge to end the unified command brought immediate backing from top field commanders who said it would cut red-tape and give fighting commanders more flexibility.

"(This) means the commander is king in his area," said Major General Cesar Tapia, who controls thousands of the Philippines' most seasoned troops in the country's southern command.

The unified command system had been widely seen as a hangover from ousted president Ferdinand Marcos's martial law regime, enabling him to secure the army under his personal patronage.

It is the first time Aquino has moved to institute major changes in the way the 160,000-strong regular military machine operates.

Chris Evert officially announces engagement to Andy Mill

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (R) — American tennis star Chris Evert Monday confirmed earlier reports when she officially announced that she will marry former U.S. Olympic skier Andy Mill sometime in the next eight months. "We are engaged," the 33-year-old Evert confirmed after advancing to the quarter-finals of the International Players Championships. "We might get married after Wimbledon or after the U.S. Open, but I don't think we should have to wait eight or nine months the second time around when we have made a commitment," Evert said. Evert and British tennis player John Lloyd were divorced last year. Mill, 35, recently divorced his first wife. Evert, ranked third in the world, said that the two became engaged last Thursday — the day Mill told Reuters he and the two getting married "is inevitable."

No more poppy plundering

COPENHAGEN (AP) — A Danish seed company has developed a poppy with a reduced content of opium, a spokesman said recently. "We are doing this so that drug addicts will not feel tempted to pick or cut the poppies to get the drug, and so that farmers will continue to be allowed to grow poppies," said Christian Petersen of Danskemel, the biggest seed producer in Europe. The white poppy is popular in Denmark for its seeds traditionally used in bread. The plant's juice contains opium, which can be refined into morphine and heroin. Drug addicts have been known to plunder poppy fields in Denmark.



An injured man is helped after last week's attack in Milltown cemetery, Belfast, where three Irish Republican Army (IRA) guerrillas shot dead by British soldiers in Gibraltar were buried.